

NOVEMBER 9, 2010 LSPA MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 8:30am in the cafeteria.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The October 12, 2010 meeting minutes were reviewed and approved as is.

BOOK FAIR – LEEANNE TONER AND ANITA COLASANTE

This year, the Book Fair will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday evening, November 16 and 17. Because the computer lab now shares the library space, the books for this year's fair will be displayed in the Main Street lobby. The students will be able to preview the books beginning on Monday. Cashiers will be set up between the lobby and the front office area, hopefully creating a nice flow. We are still looking for a few extra volunteers for that evening; if you are interested, there is a paper sign-up sheet on the library desktop, or you can email Anita. We are supporting the Blackstone Charter School this year with book donations. Important note: the younger classes who usually line up in the Main Street lobby in the mornings will line up in the Gym until the Book Fair ends.

5TH GRADE COMMITTEE – ICE CREAM SOCIAL AND T-SHIRTS

As it has been in the past, the 5th grade-sponsored Ice Cream Social will coincide with the Book Fair. This is the 5th grade class' largest fundraising event of the year. Ceci Cordeiro, one of this year's committee chairs, stated that they still needed help and asked for 5th grade parents to volunteer.

Donna Salvatore showed a sample of the 5th grade T-shirts, which are available now. In past years, the T-shirts have been distributed towards the end of the year, limiting the amount of time they can be worn, so giving them out now is a nice upgrade.

MINI-GRANTS SURPLUS COMMITTEE

Bridget Stump gave a brief history of the genesis of this grant program, as follows: the LSPA's goal is to spend our funds as close to the year in which they were given, so parents' gifts go to benefit their children while at Lincoln. Given a number of exceptional years, the LSPA is in the fortunate position of carrying a large surplus. As such, at the June 2010 meeting, the LSPA approved \$2500 (or \$1250 per period) be set aside for grants to teachers who submit a proposal. Amounts less than \$500 can be approved by the LSPA Grant Committee; amounts greater than \$500 must be approved by the LSPA.

The first period had an October deadline for teachers to submit proposals, and Tobey Kelly reviewed the summary of the submittals with the LSPA body. The Surplus Committee did "a little pruning" to ensure that all classes who submitted a legitimate grant could get funding this period. If a submission was not fully funded, or if a 2nd or 3rd submission by the same teacher was not funded, the teachers have another opportunity to submit for the second period fund. The Committee reviewed the grants they recommended the LSPA approve for this period. The grants totaled \$1500. Even though the budget was \$1250, but based on the quality of the proposals, the recommendation was approved.

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER – SARAH SWIGER, SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Sarah started by thanking the LSPA for all of the support we provide to our teachers and to our school. Sarah updated the LSPA on two important topics the School Committee is focused on: bullying and the upcoming overrides related to school expansion and renovation needs in the district.

Based on a recently passed state law, the district has formed a “Taskforce on Bullying,” the goal of which is to define the specific policies on bullying the district will follow (in keeping with state law) and then to communicate with and train staff about them. The taskforce will complete its work within the next 2 months. Although the policy may be refined in the near term, to view it, go to:

http://www.winchester.k12.ma.us/Policies9_24_08/Anti-Bullying%20Policy%202%209-7-10%202.pdf.

Some discussion ensued about the new policy, how it meshes with the teachings of Open Circle, our current processes to address problems, parents involvement, and so on. Bridget and Kate Carpini, our Co-Presidents, will consider whether an LSPA-sponsored event to discuss the policies and to provide a Q&A forum would be helpful.

Sarah then addressed the override for Vinson-Owen (V-O) and the upcoming vote to begin a feasibility study for the High School. As background, Sarah stressed that space is “not a new problem:” for the past ten years, given ever-increasing enrollment, the school district has been scouring the schools for any and all available space...now, any extra square footage is gone. We now need additional space designed for students with the appropriate support resources in place. For the elementary schools, this will come in the form of a new and expanded V-O school with a redistricting, all slated for 2013.

On November 17th, the MSBA will meet to vote on their “allowable” costs, or 40% of the project line items they fund, which equates to ~\$11mm of the \$28.9mm total project cost. At Town Meeting the next day, the vote to approve funding for the V-O project will take place. If approved, a debt exclusion override will be called for January 11, 2011. The funding from this override can only be used to pay for the project and therefore has a very specific use and ending point – this is different than a general override and important to understand.

If the funding is approved and the renovation plans move forward, bids will go out on various parts of the project, including bids to renovate Parkhurst, which will house V-O students beginning in September. A Redistricting Committee will be formed after the override vote is approved.

Chris Nixon, also a member of the School Committee, talked about the High School. At scheduled for the 11/18 Town Meeting is a vote to fund the HS feasibility study. A “study” is an inadequate description, as this work is a comprehensive evaluation of the building, its environment (esp given its current flood-plain location), and the needs of the students it will serve. As a result of the study, 3-5 schematic design options will be created. Chris stressed that approving the feasibility study did not automatically commit the town to renovating the H.S.; the approval will just be for the study itself. The feasibility study would be concluded in 1-2 years. Therefore, if a HS project proceeds, a debt exclusion override for the HS would most likely occur after V-O opens in the fall of 2013, at a vote at Town Meeting in November of 2013 for an override in January of 2014.

As there is much concern about passing almost back-to-back overrides in the town, the awareness campaign is already underway. A site, www.winchesterroomforall.com, is already on-line which presents a very holistic message and facts to back up the pro argument for passing the override. Given the V-O project also has an extensive redistricting associated with its culmination, the benefits of this

project are for everyone in the town, not just those who live in the V-O district. Moreover, if the override does not pass, it has been estimated that the district must assume ~\$10mm in “duct tape and band-aid” solutions to address the continued growing population. If past history with town overrides is any indication, the LSPA members present recognized the urgency for a strong, grass roots awareness effort, which we could help facilitate by hosting an evening meeting at Lincoln in December; more details to follow.

Finally, Chris mentioned that the Board of Selectmen would be attending the School Committee Meeting next Tuesday, the 16th of November (7:30pm in Lynch library.) In response to rumors that the BofS may not support the vote to fund the HS feasibility study, Chris urged members of the LSPA to attend the 11/16 meeting.

CO-PRESIDENTS’ REPORT

Bridget Stump began with an update on the Direct Appeal, which continues to grow steadily: as of this meeting, we have achieved 81% of the year’s goal. Bridget also mentioned that LSPA’s gift to the 5th graders will be a bit bigger this year, but they will pay for the T-shirts themselves, giving them an \$800 surplus. In community news, Bridget showed posters for the film *Race to Nowhere* and informed the LSPA that tickets were being sold at Bookends for \$10. The movie, sponsored by the Winchester Coalition for a Safer Community, will have 2 showings of the film on 11/22 at McCall. Finally, Bridget also mentioned that the school directory should be ready next week.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Lietza Molloy reviewed the year-to-date budget ending October 31, 2010. The Closing Balance was \$43,098.59. From a revenue perspective, the Direct Appeal had achieved 69% of its annual goal at the close of this period. In terms of expenses, it was fairly quiet overall, with the class teachers and specialists fund continuing to come in – ytd, \$1940 in expenses have been submitted against the \$6300 budget (which equates to \$200 per teacher.)

The Treasurer’s report ending October 31st was approved.

PRINCIPAL’S REPORT

Kate Scanlon updated the LSPA on the continuing improvements for the playground. Within the next week, the fields will be lined (as well as a new handicapped parking space) and 2 more four-square areas will be created.

The meeting concluded at 10:00am.

Respectfully submitted by Cheryl Shepard.